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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
U.S. FOOD DISTRIBUTION ADMINISTRATION
150 Broadway
New York, New York

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Point Rationing and School Lunch

Because of the discussion concerning the availability of rationed commodities for school lunch under the present OPA regulations, an effort has been made to show a variety of menus that could be used and be within the points allowable to school lunch programs. Also a comparison of the ration points required for this war-time lunch, a typical pre-rationing lunch and the estimated point allowance was made. The analysis indicates that the present point allowance is adequate to serve the "war-time" lunch and that the "pre-rationing" lunch is above the point allowance for both processed foods and meats, fats, and cheese. The logical conclusion is that our efforts should be directed toward effecting a change in the use of foods served in the lunches and that perhaps we are not justified in petitioning the OPA for an increase in the point allowance.

The war-time menus are based on a series of flexible menu plans which have been prepared by Miss Martha Rogin, Regional Nutritionist. Each basic menu plan is accompanied by suggested main dishes to provide for choice in meal planning according to the availability of foods and the price situation. The suggested main dishes make it possible to vary the basic plans from day to day or from week to week in order to avoid monotony.

The factors outlined below were given special attention in developing both the basic menu plans and the main dish suggestions:

- (1) Nutritional Adequacy - All menu plans have been checked against the requirements of the Type A complete lunch, as defined in the Local-Purchase School Lunch Program, and satisfactorily fulfill the standards. Milk has been listed as a beverage in each menu plan inasmuch as few of the main dishes or desserts include milk in their preparation.
- (2) Equipment - All the main dishes suggested can be prepared with top-of-stove cooking facilities and usually require only one burner. Wherever possible the menu plan has been limited to the kind of meal that can be served by the use of one plate or one bowl only, thus cutting down the labor required for dishwashing.

- (3) Wartime Food Supply - Using the Regional School Lunch Foods List as a basis, emphasis has been placed on the use of fresh vegetables and fruits, variety meats, meat alternates, whole grain cereals, and other foods which are likely to be available on the local market. Attention has been given to the cost of the meal and menu plans have been limited to an economical assortment of main dishes, salad suggestions, etc. Emphasis has been placed on common vegetables, such as carrots, turnips, cabbage, potatoes, etc. because it is thought that these are available throughout the school year in most localities in the Northeast Region.

The basic point allowances are .6 points per meal per child for processed foods and .93 points per meal per child for meat, fats, and cheese or upon a percentage of amount used during the base month, whichever is less. It is believed that the .6 point per meal for processed foods represents the best estimate of the actual allowance in most schools. However, the .93 points per meal for meat, fats and cheese in all probability, will be too high in nearly all schools. This is because these commodities normally have been used in minimum quantities in school lunches. Therefore, the red points allowable have been figured on the percentage of the amount used during the base month by the pre-rationing sample menu chosen for comparative purposes. (These point factors established by OPA are given in Digest #60)

From this it was estimated that 50 children would receive an allowance of 150 points a week for five meals for processed foods and 97 points a week for five meals for meat, fats, and cheese.

Listed below are a week's typical menus showing the number of points needed to secure the foods. It should be pointed out that this is just a sample and any number of menus using a variety of main dishes could be prepared requiring approximately the same number of points. Fortified margarine, because of its lower point value, is used instead of butter, both in cooking and as a spread.

Recipes and ration points were figured on a basis of 50 children. Recipes were taken from either USDA Misc. Publ. No. 246 or 408 or from U. S. Department of the Interior Conservation Bulletin 27.

Suggested War-time menus for one week

First menu	Creamed mixed vegetables with egg
	Raw vegetable
	Bread - Fortified margarine
	Fruit - Milk
	Total red points required - 10
	Total blue points required - 0

-3-

Second menu Split-pea soup with cured pork and vegetables
(menu revised to use 3 pounds of cured pork)
Bread - Fortified margarine
Fruit - Milk
Total red points required 25
Total blue points required 0

Third menu Beef and vegetable stew
Bread - Fortified margarine
Fruit - Milk
Total red points required 43
Total blue points required 0

Fourth menu Cracked wheat chowder with vegetables
Peanut butter sandwich
Fruit - Milk
Total red points required 6
Total blue points required 0

Fifth menu Fish, spaghetti and tomatoes (menu revised
to use not over 5 quarts of canned tomatoes)
Raw vegetable or fruit
Bread - Fortified margarine
Milk
Total red points required 9
Total blue points required 130

Total red points required for week 93
Total blue points required for week 130

Alternate Macaroni and cheese
Fruit or raw vegetable
Bread - Fortified margarine
Milk
Total red points required 45
Total blue points required 0

If a menu using cheddar cheese as the main dish were served once a week in place of those suggested, the total ration points for the week would be:

Instead of First menu	Weekly total red points required	128
" " Second menu	" " blue "	130
" " Second menu	" " red "	113
" " Second menu	" " blue "	130
" " Third menu	" " red "	95
" " Third menu	" " blue "	130

SEP 20 1943

Instead of Fourth menu	Weekly total red points required	132
" " " " blue " "	"	130
" " Fifth menu	" " red " "	129
" " " " blue " "	"	130

In order to make a comparison between the war-time pattern of menus, and a pre-rationing school lunch menu, ration points required for preparation of a week's meals at a school in Massachusetts were computed. This is a low-income school and W.P.A. supplied the labor and trained supervision in the planning of the meals. The menu on which ration points were computed was served during the second week of January, 1943. This school was chosen because it was thought to be representative of the better complete lunch programs. These lunches were planned to a large degree around the use of commodities that were in the warehouse and are not based on Type lunches as the War-time menus.

Pre-Rationing menus

First menu	Corn chowder (corn canned)
	Wheat bread - butter
	Apple sauce
	Milk
	Total red points required 15
	Total blue points required 76
Second menu	Corn beef hash
	Beets
	Bread - butter
	Stewed prunes
	Milk
	Total red points required 65
	Total blue points required 0
Third menu	Creamed potatoes
	Squash - Green beans (canned beans)
	Bread - butter
	Chocolate Pudding
	Milk
	Total red points required 24
	Total blue points required 160
Fourth menu	Chicken Soup (noodles and vegetables)
	Bread - butter
	Ginger drop cookies
	Milk
	Total red points required 15
	Total blue points required 0

Fifth menu	Spanish rice Buttered carrots Bread - butter Jello with custard sauce Milk
	Total red points required 23
	Total blue points required 129

Total red points required for week 142
Total blue points required for week 365

The comparison of the points required under the two plans and the points allowable is as follows:

	<u>Pre-rationing plan</u>	<u>War-time plan</u>	<u>Points allowable</u>
Total red points required for week	142	93	97
Total blue points required for week	365	130	150

By comparing the war-time menu with the pre-rationing menu, it can be seen that "red points" used in the latter menu are nearly one-third greater than those used in the former. If margarine is used in place of butter as a spread in the pre-rationing menus, the same as it is in the wartime menus, the red points required for the week would be reduced from 142 to 119 points. The further necessary reduction to 97 points could only be accomplished by limiting the use of meats and cooking fats.

Processed foods used by the Massachusetts school require nearly twice as many "blue points" as are available to a school serving 50 children. This is because canned tomatoes, canned corn and canned beans were used.

If the Massachusetts menu represents an average school lunch, it is evident that radical changes from past uses of processed foods must be made under the rationing and that meat, fats, and cheese will have to be used in even smaller quantities than before rationing. No processed fruit is used in either menu. If fresh vegetables are substituted for processed vegetables it will be possible to meet ration requirements. A comparison between servings of fresh vegetables under the two menus as given below:

	<u>Pre-rationing Menu</u>		<u>War-time menu</u>	
	<u>Fresh</u>	<u>Processed</u>	<u>Fresh</u>	<u>Processed</u>
First menu	2	1	4	
Second menu	3		1	
Third menu	2	1	4	
Fourth menu	2		3	
Fifth menu	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	10	3	15	1

Below is a comparison of weekly serving of vegetables under the two menus, which shows that common vegetables are used primarily in both menus.

<u>Vegetables</u>	<u>Pre-rationing menu</u>	<u>War-time menu</u>
Onions	3	3
Celery	2	1
Potatoes	2	2
Beets	1	
Squash	1	
String beans	P <u>/1</u>	
Tomatoes	P <u>/1</u>	P <u>/1</u>
Carrots	1	3
Raw vegetables		2
Turnips		2
Cabbage		2
Corn	P <u>/1</u>	

/1 Processed foods used

As can be seen from these tables, the difference in the number of processed vegetables does not differ greatly. Fresh vegetables were used 10 times in the pre-rationing menu and 15 in the war-time menu. The difference in either the use of processed or fresh vegetables does not warrant the statement that a significant amount of additional labor would be necessary for the war-time menus.

Little has been said about fruits. In the pre-rationing menu, fruit was served twice and five times in the war-time menu. While the prepared fruit dishes would take additional time, it is possible to serve oranges, tangerines, apples, etc. that would entail no additional labor and provide the same nutritive content as a prepared dish. Here the availability and cost of the fruits will be the important factor.

If the war-time menu plan, or one similar, is used it will be possible to serve well-balanced lunches under rationing provided fresh vegetables are used rather than processed foods. Canned tomatoes, which have always been popular for school lunch menus, rationed cheese and meat will have to be used in minimum quantities. In the extensive use of fresh vegetables probably the three most important factors to consider are the availability and cost of fresh vegetables, and extra time needed in the preparation of them. Rural areas, in general, have the most difficulty in securing fresh vegetables. With the OPA price ceilings on fresh vegetables, even if they are available and the cost is satisfactory, is a matter of conjecture. However, it should be pointed out that the time needed to prepare a lunch must be based on the total lunch rather than on one dish. Under the war-time menu plan, desserts requiring preparation are not served and sandwiches are served infrequently, while in

most complete lunch programs it has been the practice to serve sandwiches at least several times a week and to include puddings, cookies, etc. in the menu. These, in all probability, would take a longer time to prepare than do fresh vegetables.

It appears that if the above facts are true, the school lunch problem under rationing will be one of encouraging lunch room managers and cooks to change the types of dishes served and type of foods included in these dishes rather than trying to get additional allowances from O.P.A. In fact, it would appear that we are not justified in asking O.P.A. for additional points for school lunches but rather that our efforts should be concentrated on working with school lunch sponsors in adapting their menu plans to fit the wartime food situation. These conclusions apply mainly to those schools operating under the new School Lunch Program where a wider range in the choice of foods is possible than was the case under the warehouse program.

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